

The Signature

Sigonella, Sicily



Remember
clocks fall back this at
2 a.m. Oct. 26.

Oct 24, 2003

Vol 20 No. 42

NKO leading the training revolution

By JO1 Craig Coleman
Staff Writer

A revolution is underway in the Navy.

This revolution, the Commander, Naval Personnel Development Command (CNPDP) mandated "Revolution in Training" is changing the way Sailors learn and the nerve center of that revolution is Navy Knowledge Online (NKO).

The web portal is designed to become the naval personnel one stop shop for all career information.

NKO was one of the topics discussed during the recent Career Information Training Course in the Retention Center. According to AZC(AW) Ken Goff, base training office LCPO, NKO is a vital career tool. "If I was an ambitious young Sailor I'd log into my NKO account and take a quick spin around—look to see what's happening, what's new," said Goff. "NKO is the Navy—now."

NKO currently serves more than 90,000 users, but, according to its designers, it has the capacity for up to 350,000. The purpose of NKO is to allow Sailors to use its portal to access the information required to excel, both professionally and personally and to allow Sailors to take maximum advantage of the tools and opportunities available to them, no matter where they are stationed or deployed.

"I estimate 30 to 40 percent of the people at COMSTA use (NKO)," said IT1(AW) James Lerlo, COMSTA N-3 divisional career counselor, after attending the NKO brief during the Career Information Training Course. "I'll take the information back to my division, especially to the younger kids who are more computer-savvy. The more people know about these things the more they are likely to use it."

CNPDP recently released important career information and Sailors who are registered users of (NKO) learned about it first. The Oct. 14 release of newest development of its Task

NKO, page 11

VP-45 files in support of Operation Active Endeavor

By Lt. j.g. Steven Seney
VP-45

On March 10, NATO maritime forces began escorting allied civilian shipping through the Strait of Gibraltar. The North Atlantic Council, the Alliance's highest decision-making body, decided to extend NATO's Operation Active Endeavor to include escorting non-military ships traveling through the Straits to maintain security in the area and to secure the safe transit of designated Allied ships. The narrow Strait of Gibraltar is widely recognized as a potential site of terrorist attacks, and so the measure has been agreed upon as a precaution. Operation Active Endeavor was initiated on Oct. 26, 2001 to monitor shipping in the eastern Mediterranean Sea as part of measures aimed at assisting the U. S. after the Sept. 11 attacks. As such it is a valuable part of the worldwide campaign against terrorism, and is part of the NATO action that followed the declaration of Article 5 on Sept. 12, 2001. Since the start of the operation, more than 24,000 merchant vessels have been monitored as they passed through the Strait of Gibraltar.

VP-45 aircraft began flying armed patrol missions over the Strait of Gibraltar the first week in August in support of Active Endeavor. Maritime patrol aircraft bring a valuable asset to the mission in their ability to patrol large areas of the strait quickly and being able to promptly respond to trouble calls. P-3 aircraft also have the ability, through the use of AIMS video surveillance equipment, to monitor maritime vessels unseen from miles away. The abilities to conduct unobtrusive surveillance and to cover vast tracks of ocean are the reasons that P-3's have been tasked with supporting Operation Active Endeavor on this deployment.

Today's Hometown Weather

Los Angeles, CA



Los Angeles

High 80° F - Low 59° F
Mostly sunny

NASSIG Navy Ball was a ball



Photo by JO3 Steve Weaver

Months of planning, fundraising, and work culminated last Saturday with Naval Air Station Sigonella's 2003 Navy Ball held at the Sheraton Hotel in Catania.

By JO3 Steve Weaver and Rachel Morken
Staff writers

Sailor's, family members, local nationals, and many other people donned either their best dinner dress blues or formal attire to take part in the festivities, which included cocktails, dinner, dancing, and a host of other activities.

"It shaped up terrifically," said Capt. Tim Davison, NASSIG command officer. "The NAS Sigonella Operations department was tasked with being the overall coordinator. We got tremendous support from the other tenant commands on base. We're holding it at the

Sheraton, which we haven't held a Navy Ball off base in over two years after Sept. 11. So we're stepping out and holding it at one of the most exclusive hotels in the Catania area. It's very elegant."

"The Sheraton opened their hearts to us in true Italian hospitality where anything that we needed they were able to provide for us," said Lt. Ted Ferguson, Navy Ball coordinator.

"This is a great facility, right on the water where Navy men and women need to be," Rear Adm. Garry E. Hall, guest speaker and executive assistant to Commander Allied Naval Forces North. "It's a

Navy Ball, page 12

Sigonella chief jumps into history

ATC Lauren Blakely leapt from a plane into Arnhem, Holland, reenacting the famous third phase of Operation Market Garden. The largest airborne operation in history sought to invade Hitler's Germany via the Netherlands, bypassing heavily-defended frontlines at the Belgian border.

By ATC Lauren Blakely

There comes a time in every man's life when he has to follow his dream. On September 10, 2003, I left to pursue mine. Since becoming a historical re-enactor in 1987, I have been collecting the uniforms and equipment of the soldiers, Sailors and airmen of the two world wars and re-creating what it was like during these conflicts to educate the general public. I have amassed a walk-in closet full of uniforms, six footlockers full of equipment and a large gun safe full of weapons. After watching the movie *A Bridge Too Far* and meeting a veteran of the British Glider Pilot Regiment back in 1990, I started collecting British and American Airborne uniforms, insignia and equipment. I would go to schools and air shows to lay out my "kit" and explain all about what it was like to be a paratrooper, but something was always missing. Even though I was a Naval Aircrewman with over 3000 flight hours, I had never actually used a parachute. Most aircrewmen have an aversion to jumping out of perfectly good airplanes and I am no exception. However, I am constantly trying to improve my impression and I could only improve on one last thing, actually jumping from an aircraft, static line, round canopy and all!

As time goes by, more and more WWII veterans pass on and their deeds and experiences with them. I wanted to be able to experience what they did (barring having someone shoot at me) so I contacted Sgt. Roy Mobbs of the Pathfinder U.K. group who was planning a commemorative jump into Arnhem, Netherlands. One of the stipulations on participating was to attend a jump



Chief Blakely and his comrades jumping into Holland from a C-47 Dakota.

course and earn my wings, so I signed up for the jump course they were sponsoring at Texel, Netherlands the week of the Arnhem celebrations. Upon my arrival on the island early Saturday morning, I was introduced to a number of people I would soon be jumping with and the instructors who would be ensuring I did it safely and correctly. Ground school started that day and we were introduced to the parachutes we were going to be using, given a tour of the airfield, drop zone and covering safety rules of the school. Sun-

day the "real" training started. We were introduced to the acronym that all paratroops love to hate, the PLF. That's short for Parachute Landing Fall. It's the controlled roll you execute upon hitting the ground that will dissipate the shock throughout your body to prevent injury. We practiced these techniques over and over till we had bruises upon bruises, but it was imperative that we get this part of training right. We graduated from PLFs while standing on the ground to an

Jump, page 8



Direct Line

Capt. T.L. Davison
NASSIG
Commanding Officer

Honor. Courage. Commitment...The Navy's Core Values.

Honor: "I will bear true faith and allegiance..." Accordingly, we will: Conduct ourselves in the highest ethical manner in all relationships with peers, superiors and subordinates; Be honest and truthful in our dealings with each other, and with those outside the Navy; Be willing to make honest recommendations and accept those of junior personnel; Encourage new ideas and deliver the bad news, even when it is unpopular; Abide by an uncompromising code of integrity, taking responsibility for our actions and keeping our word; Fulfill or exceed our legal and ethical responsibilities in our public and personal lives twenty-four hours a day; Not tolerate illegal or improper behavior or even the appearance of such behavior; Be accountable for our professional and personal conduct at all times; Be mindful of the privilege to serve our fellow Americans.

Courage: "I will support and defend..." Accordingly, we will: Have the courage to meet the demands of our profession and the mission when it is hazardous, demanding, or otherwise difficult; Make decisions in the best interest of the Navy and the nation, without regard to personal consequences; Meet these challenges while adhering to the highest standards of personal conduct and decency; Be loyal to our nation, ensuring the resources entrusted to us are used in an honest, careful, and efficient way; Recognize courage is the value that gives us the moral and mental strength to do what is right, even in the face of personal or professional adversity.

Commitment: "I will obey the orders..." Accordingly, we will: Demand respect up and down the chain of command; Care for the safety, professional, personal and spiritual well-being of our people; Show respect toward all people without regard to race, religion, or gender; Treat each individual with human dignity; Be committed to positive change and constant improvement; Exhibit the highest degree of moral character, technical excellence, quality and competence in what we have been trained to do; Acknowledge that the day-to-day duty of every Navy man and woman is to work together as a team to improve the quality of our work, our people and ourselves.

At NAS Sigonella, we take these Core Values seriously every day! In regards to commitment, we are showing you that we care committed to YOU and your family with all of the quality of life and service initiatives we have in place and under construction. From the Child Development Center, the new All-Hands Crater Pub on NAS I, or the upcoming parking garages on NAS II, our goal is to make your life easier.

Now, you can show your commitment back by utilizing the various on-base facilities we have! Whether you go to Da Michele's or the Galley for dinner; the Crater Pub for an MWR-hosted event; hitting that magic 300 at the bowling alley; taking a college course through one of our numerous base campuses; catching the recent flick at the base theater; or going on a three-day weekend Adventure Unlimited trip to Lipari, you are supporting the services we are providing to the Sigonella community. Each facility is unique and offers hours of entertainment, food and fun. There are lots of things to do and see on this wonderful island of the sun!

We are constantly improving our environment here on base and our attitudes off base. We have accomplished a lot with our friends and host nation. My promise to you is that we will continually strive to make things better!

The Pulse

What everyone needs to know about the new Medical Evacuation System

Courtesy U.S. Naval Hospital Sigonella

Changes in the medical evacuation system is for routine outpatient appointments where civilian airlines will be used as the main source of transport instead of military aircraft.

How will these changes affect our Sigonella community covered by Tricare? The process began October one of this year, and will only affect routine outpatient medical evacuations and air travel is now being funded by U.S. Navy Europe from monies received from U.S. Air Force Europe reported Capt. Denzel E. Garner, commanding officer, of Naval Hospital Sigonella. These funds will cover the costs of commercial and military flights. The sponsor's command still funds per diem, lodging, ground transportation

and miscellaneous expenses for active duty or family members and non-medical attendants (traveling companions).

There are two main benefits of the new travel arrangements for routine outpatient appointments. According to Garner there are reductions of times spent away from the workspaces and family members. These times ranged from sometimes weeks to now a few days. The increased use of local medical facilities approved by Tricare has reduced the need for using the air evacuation system. New Federal Laws allow one non-medical attendant to accompany someone going to a routine outpatient medical appointment with medical requirements as the deciding factor. The Sponsor's Command may fund other non-medical attendants at their discretion. Air evacuation for inpatients, as well as urgent and priority patients will not be affected.

What happens when a Tricare beneficiary is admitted to a local Italian hospital? A medical team from Naval Hospital Sigonella goes to see the patient at the Italian hospital. This medical team is made up of a surgeon, translator and Tricare representative and the team ensures the patient is receiving a high standard of care. The Preferred Provider Network (PPN) is a group of local Italian healthcare providers approved to treat Tricare beneficiaries treated as inpatients and outpatients. Furthermore, the increased use of local medical doctors for routine appointments reduces the need for aeromedical transport. A committee of healthcare providers at Naval Hospital Sigonella assures that the PPN meet specific qualifications.

To determine method of travel the following should be evaluated:

1. Distance to specialty care location
2. Patient's overall physical condition
3. Patient preference
4. Business case analysis



CRIME STOPPER'S HOTLINE

624-6389

Oct. 6 - Oct. 13

The following incidents were reported and categorized as follows:

- Traffic accidents without injuries - 11
- Traffic accident with injuries - 6
- Car break-ins - 5
- DUI - 2
- DUI's 2002 - 42
- DUI's 2002 - 35

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Co-signing a loan

What you should know before signing for someone else

By LNC Robert E. Lippert

What would you do if a friend or relative asked you to co-sign a loan? Your signature means a lot more than a "vote of confidence." By law, co-signing a loan means you personally guarantee the debt will be paid. If the borrower fails to pay, the lender doesn't have to go after the borrower first — he may choose to go directly to you. If the loan agreement authorizes late charges and attorneys' fees, you may be liable for those, too.

Most states provide that a co-signer is entitled to notice if the borrower defaults or becomes delinquent. The co-signer then has a certain number of days to make arrangements to pay. If the co-signer does not take action in time, adverse credit reports may be issued against him/her.

If you, the co-signer, fail to pay, the lender may sue you. If the court does award a judgement against you,

your property may be sold and your pay may be garnished to satisfy the judgement. Then, your only recourse is trying to collect reimbursement from the borrower.

Despite these risks, there may be times when you want to co-sign a loan. Perhaps your son or daughter needs a first loan, or a close friend is facing repossession, court action, or just needs help. Here are a few things to consider before you co-sign:

1. Be sure you can afford to pay the loan if the borrower defaults.
2. Before you pledge any property (for example, a car or house) to secure a loan, remember that if the borrower defaults, you could lose the property.
3. Ask the lender to set a ceiling on the amount of money you might owe — the lender does not have to do this, but some will if asked. You may also be able to renegotiate terms of

cosigner repayment, for example, to pay principal plus interest, but not late charges, court costs, or attorney's fees.

4. Ask the lender to agree, in writing, to notify you if the borrower misses a payment, before any late charges are added or before the loan is "accelerated" (repayment in full demanded because of failure to pay installments.)

5. Obtain copies of all important papers signed by the borrower: the loan contract, the Truth-in-Lending Disclosure Statement, and any warranties for products purchased on a credit sale. This documentation will be important if there is a dispute between the borrower and the seller.

If you have any questions or experience any problems with a loan you cosigned, please make an appointment to see an attorney at the Naval Legal Service Office at 624-5258.

Commissaries nix home-printed coupons

By Rick Brink
DECA

FORT LEE, Va. — Commissaries are no longer accepting "home-printed" coupons as the grocery industry comes to terms with the fraudulent use of Internet coupons.

"We still gladly accept manufacturers coupons — the kind you clip out of newspapers or magazines or that you receive in the mail. What we're not accepting are coupons that have been downloaded from the Internet and printed with a home computer because it's too difficult for our cashiers to tell if they are valid," said Bob Vitkacs, the Defense Commissary Agency's director of operations and product support.

The use of fraudulent Internet coupons is growing in the grocery business and many commercial grocers are also

declining to accept home-printed coupons. Most coupons are legitimate, but home computers and Internet access have made it easy to alter legitimate coupons for fraudulent use, Vitkacs said.

Some analysts estimate the loss by coupon fraud to the grocery industry to be millions of dollars. Fraud ultimately costs consumers as manufacturers raise their prices to recoup losses.

To protect against loss, DeCA officials decided to immediately suspend acceptance of home-printed, photocopied or facsimile-generated coupons — color and black-and-white.

"This is an interim measure we've adopted immediately to protect our customers and industry partners," Vitkacs said.

Navy Commissions New Guided Missile Destroyer Chafee

Special from United States Department of Defense

WASHINGTON (NNS) — The newest Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyer, Chafee, will be commissioned Saturday, Oct. 18, 2003, during an 11 a.m. eastern ceremony in Newport, R.I.

The ship honors John Hubbard Chafee of Providence, R.I. Chafee distinguished himself as a U.S. senator, Navy secretary, Rhode Island governor, and a Marine — with service as both an enlisted man and commissioned officer.

Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Michael W. Hagee, will deliver the ceremony's principal address. Serving as co-sponsors for the ship will be Virginia Chafee, wife of the ship's namesake and Diane Blair, wife of retired Navy Adm. Dennis C. Blair, former commander, U.S. Pacific Command. In the time-honored Navy tradition of commissioning U.S. naval ships, the co-sponsors will give the order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

Chafee is the 40th ship of 62 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers currently authorized by Congress.

We make a Difference

By Chaplain
Thom Dansak
Command
Chaplain

This past Sunday, I was reflecting on something that seems to be common to various communities. They all seem to single people out as heroes of their specific group.

Take for example, the very last line we call "The United States" singled out such people as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr. Their ideas are considered important to our national community. We honor buttons. We even have holiday.

Take the armed services example of a community that lionizes its heroes. We have read of Navy Commodore John Barry the Father of the Navy, and Jones, a great war fighter. The like Adm. Chester Nimitz, Gen. MacArthur, and Col. Chesty Puller are remembered mostly for their feats of combat.

My own Catholic Church men and women considered call them "Saints." Recently Paul II singled out a very simple woman whose love and care for the poor was known throughout Mother Theresa of Calcutta, declared that this remarkable woman

a difference in the Church community and in the world community. He held her up as a hero worth imitating. He honored her with a new title: Blessed Theresa of Calcutta.

Organizations and communities look up to their heroes. We admire them and often find some inspiration from their example.

There is one small community that also needs to have heroes. This community is perhaps the most important of all the communities of the earth. It is called FAMILY. Families are the first place where children need to find heroes to imitate. I am old fashioned and believe that every kid should want to be like their mom and dad in very many ways. And, when these children grow to adulthood, I would like them to still think their moms and dads were really "heroes", that they were great people, that they are worth imitating in many ways.

Think about this. What are your children seeing in you? Is it worth imitating. Are you a hero in their eyes? In addition, if you have no children or are not yet married, what will your yet-to-be-born children see in you. Are you developing strengths and qualities they can admire? Is it the best you can show them? The best you have to offer them for their future?

John Paul II stated that Mother Theresa of Calcutta was worthy of imitation. I hope your children will say the same about you: You were worth imitating! If they do, then, consider yourself "blessed."

NAS Sigonella Worship Opportunities

Catholic Mass

Saturday 5 p.m. Chapel (NAS II)
Sunday 9 a.m. Chapel (NAS I)
Sunday 9 a.m. in Italian 41st
Stormo Chapel (NAS II)
Sunday 11 a.m. Community Center (Mineo)

Protestant Traditional Worship

Sunday 9 a.m. Chapel (NAS II)

Protestant Worship

Sunday 9 a.m. Community Center (Mineo)
Sunday 11 a.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Sunday 1 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Church of Christ

Sunday 3:30 p.m. Chapel (NAS I)

Jewish Shabbat Service

Last Friday of the month 5 p.m.
Chapel (NAS I)

Weekdays

Daily Catholic Mass 11:30 a.m.
(NAS I & II Chapels)
Wednesday Protestant Bible Study
4:45 p.m. (NAS II Chapel)
For more details, call 624-4295 or 624-2947.

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NAVY NEWS

Sea Swap Initiative Sees Positive Results After First Year in Surface Force

By JO2SW Jason Heavner, Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO (NNS) — The third crew exchange in the Navy's Sea Swap program took place recently in Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates, when USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53) crew members donned USS Higgins (DDG 76) ballcaps and commenced their deployment after relieving USS Benfold (DDG 65) crew members aboard Higgins' hull. After the swap, team Benfold crew members flew back to San Diego to man the hull of John Paul Jones.

Team Benfold crew members experienced one of the major advantages of Sea Swap: reduced transit time to the area of responsibility, which has been a morale boost for crews involved. "We frequently hear from Sailors that one of the disadvantages to six-deployments are the long and tedious transits. With maximum on-station time, they are getting a quicker access to real-world missions," said Vice Adm. Timothy LaFleur, Commander, Naval Surface Force.

One of the real-world missions that Higgins took part of was the coalition force that launched Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles onto military targets in Iraq during the opening stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Shortly after the Benfold crew swapped hulls with Higgins in April, they executed numerous queries and boardings of vessels suspected of having ties to the Al Qaeda terrorist network. They also conducted maritime intercept operations in the north Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden,



Following a muster of ship's company on the pier, the crew of the guided missile destroyer USS Benfold (DDG 65) relieves the crew of the guided missile destroyer USS Higgins (DDG 76) as part of the U.S. Navy's Sea Swap initiative. This is the second phase of the Navy's Sea Swap initiative, which involves rotating three crews through a single ship to allow for more time on station in theater, while returning crews home at six-month intervals.

which successfully deterred senior Taliban and Al Qaeda operatives from choosing an avenue of escape.

"Sea Swap has been running more smoothly and efficiently than planned," said Cmdr. Thomas Deitz, Command, Naval Surface Force operations officer. "There were initial concerns when OIF began last spring as far as the responsibilities like battle groups, strike forces and maritime intercept operations. With the increased rate of forward presence that we've been getting out of the two platforms, it's been very effective."

According to Deitz, the program has been so effective that plans are be-

ing drawn up to include Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigates but no dates have been set yet.

Despite the positive results of Sea Swap, it's still too early to say if the concept will be a mainstay in the surface force, but when it comes to experimenting with other classes of ships, LaFleur said, "Yes we are, which is why we tried this program out, to see what works and what doesn't. So if increased forward presence is needed in a certain part of the world, we'll know if swapping crews is a viable option. You can't know that unless you do it and find out."

EW and CTT Ratings Become One

By Lt. Cmdr. Gary Kirchner, Naval Personnel Development Command Public Affairs

CORY STATION, Fla. (NNS) — In an effort to leverage the strength of two key intelligence ratings, while streamlining the collection and processing training pipeline, the electronic warfare technician (EW) rating recently merged with cryptologic technician - technical (CTT). Conversion of all EWs to the CTT designator is already underway, creating an elite community of about 3,000 technicians.

"This merger will create efficiencies in delivering training and reductions in cost to train," said Commander Naval Education and Training Command Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms, Jr. "This will also enable us to cross utilize our Sailors whose job it is to provide threat recognition and electronic countermeasures."

Since each rating focuses on gathering electronic intelligence signals from a variety of sources, and operating and maintaining equipment designed to deceive and jam enemy sensors, specifically those associated with electronically guided weapons systems, the merger will significantly increase the number and diversity of duty sta-

tions available. Both highly selective fields, the merger also creates an even greater talent pool from which to draw, greatly enhancing operational readiness.

"This was a smart step to take," said Master Chief Cryptologic Technician (Technical) (SW/AW) Benjamin Key, Center for Naval Cryptology's Vector Model manager and a former EW. "We basically do the same job. With this merger we will have more career opportunities. Before our options were sea duty or shore duty as an instructor. Now with the right schooling we can be assigned to subs or become part of an aircrew."

The origins of EWs date back to World War I when the British used coastal radio direction finders to locate and determine the direction of the German fleet before the Battle of Jutland. Since, the importance of technicians rapidly grew through World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, and the war in Vietnam. In the 1970s the Navy began teaching radarmen and electronic technicians electronic warfare. Sailors holding the Navy Enlisted Classification to operate and maintain electronic warfare equipment were the first Sailors to be converted to electronic warfare technicians.

Uniform Shift

NASSIG will shift from whites to blues Monday, Nov. 3, so get those uniforms ready.

The Energy Block

Can you just believe this wonderful weather we have been having lately. Working here in the Energy Office I have the privilege of monitoring both NAS I & II. And the energy consumption dropped like a lead weight. Speaking with the locals it has been said that the temperature this summer was unusually hotter than previous years. I for one welcome the cooler weather, both for PT and the work that can be done outdoors. With the cooler weather it appears to be bringing in some much needed rain. And from my standpoint means more money for NASSIG. By producing less water, we generate less electricity thus a huge savings. Last year NASSIG used approx. 258 million gallons of water or 700,000 gallons per day at a staggering price of about \$4.80 per 1,000 gallons. Just for NAS I & II that comes out to \$3,360 a day or \$1.2 million a year. Folks, one dripping faucet can waste 20 gallons of water a day and a leaking toilet can waste 200. It will only take one second to secure that sink or 30 seconds to call the trouble desk at PWD x6013.

When we think of technology most of us do not think about how far we have come in the last 30 years, or how far along we will be advanced in say 20 years from now. But did you know: The old fashioned light bulb will eventually give way to the smaller much more efficient LED, or light emitting diode. Already being used in some spot lights using just a fraction of the energy and producing a far cleaner more visible light. Did you forget to turn off the iron or stove? Appliances that will be able to be switched off by computer access are being developed at MIT. Physicists have long known that some chemicals heat up when magnetized and cool down when demagnetized, thus producing far more efficient refrigeration or cooling units. This is being pursued at Ames laboratory in Ames Iowa. There are some now that ask, "what is an eight track."

Let's use, not abuse

Officials set holiday mailing dates, policies

WASHINGTON — The dates for mailing items to and from overseas locations in time for the holidays are fast approaching, and Military Postal Service Agency officials have suggestions for ensuring packages and letters arrive on time.

In fact, customers who mail early may save money and still have an on-time delivery, said Mark J. DeDomenic, chief of operations at the agency.

"As we get closer to Christmas, the mail volumes get higher, and therefore mail takes longer to be delivered," he said.

The recommended mail deadlines for sending mail from the United States to all overseas military mailing addresses for the holidays are:

- Parcel post: Nov. 13
- Space-available mail: Nov. 28
- Parcel-airlift mail: Dec. 4
- Priority and first-class letters or cards: Dec. 11

DeDomenic said these dates can also be observed by customers sending mail from overseas locations to the United States.

Customs forms are required on all international mail, and shipments should be properly packaged before sending them overseas, DeDomenic said.

"Customers should always remember to ensure they package their parcels in strong boxes and use a lot of packing material," DeDomenic said. "Popcorn or newspaper makes for great packaging material."

He also suggested customers use a nylon-fiber reinforced tape to bundle up their packages.

"Keep in mind that packages going to military addresses overseas are handled many times and travel long distances. Therefore strong boxes and good internal packing is important," DeDomenic said.

While the United States has restrictions on mailing items such as poisons and weapons, other countries have their own restrictions for what can be mailed, DeDomenic said. Postal customers need to consider the length of the journey overseas and the final destination when considering what to send.

"I would advise customers to not mail perishable items and to ensure they do not mail things such as batteries, hazardous materials or weapons," DeDomenic said. "Items such as coffee or tobacco are restricted to certain locations. If there is any doubt as to the mailability of particular items, customers should always check with their local post office."

Because of security restrictions, mass-mailing operations such as Operation Dear Abby or the "Any Servicemember" mailing program are not being supported by the agency, DeDomenic said.

New TSP open season

From Chief of Naval Personnel, Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) — Sailors interested in contributing to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) can sign up now. The open season began Oct. 15 and runs through December 31. Those already enrolled can increase their contributions up to the allowable level.

TSP works much like a civilian 401(K) savings plan, where pre-tax dollars are invested to provide retirement monies for Sailors. Taxes are deferred on TSP contributions, meaning no federal (and in most cases, state) income taxes are paid on contributions or earnings until the money is withdrawn, usually at retirement when many are in a lower tax bracket.

Contributions to TSP can range from as little as one percent of basic pay in 2003. Bonus, special or incentive pay may also be contributed, up to the \$12,000 IRS tax limit permitted this year. For those serving in a combat zone, the current ceiling for contributions is \$40,000. Basic pay contribution limits increase through 2006 when TSP contributions will be limited only by IRS rules.

TSP investments may be directed to any of five different funds, which vary in risk and investment mixture. The five funds are: government securities investment (G fund); fixed income investment, common stock index investment, small capitalization stock index investment and international stock index investment.

Navy Extends Deadline for LDO/CWO Applicants

By JO2 David Van Scoy, Navy Region Southwest Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO (NNS) — The Navy's Limited Duty Officer (LDO) and Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) community manager Capt. Bob Fiegl announced that the deadline for enlisted Sailors and Chiefs to apply for the LDO or CWO commissioning programs for 2005 has been extended to Nov. 1 (NAVADMIN 263-03).

Capt. Fiegl, along with senior LDO/CWO detailers conducted informational briefings on board Naval Station San Diego, Naval Base Coronado and Naval Base Point Loma Sept. 22 to 24. Approximately 120 Sailors and Chiefs attended the information briefs designed to inform prospective applicants about the LDO and CWO commissioning programs.

Senior LDOs and CWOs from around the Navy were in San Diego to attend a senior leadership conference hosted by Capt. Anthony Gonzales, commanding officer, Naval Submarine Base Point Loma. The conference focused on proposed policy changes, promotion and billet opportunities, education and Revolution in Training innovations, retirement issues and career counseling.

The LDO and CWO communities offer Sailors and Chiefs a commissioning program that enables a career path to captain in the LDO community and CWO-5 in the CWO community.

"There is an added opportunity now for qualified candidates to submit an application, get it through the chain of command and get it mailed to Millington, Tenn., so it arrives at Pers-801G by Nov. 1," said Fiegl.

News Briefs

New Chapel Service

Beginning Nov. 2 at noon in NAS 11 Chapel, the Command Religious Program will begin a new Lay Leader Service for members of the United Pentecostal Church, International. For more information, call the Lay Reader DCCM Gregg Steven at 624-6257 or 335-5785539.

VP-45 applauds pilots

The VP-45 family would like to issue hearty congratulations to Cmdr. William A. Fitzgerald, commanding officer of VP-45. Cmdr. Fitzgerald achieved a significant milestone on Aug. 10, logging 2,500 hours of flying time in the P-3C Orion. The Pelicans of VP 45 wish him many more safe flight hours.

Congratulations also go to Lt. Brian Bradford for achieving another milestone in his career. Bradford successfully completed the VP-45 instructor pilot syllabus October 12. He now assumes a critical role in the training of junior pilots to be the next generation of Patrol Plane Commanders within VP-45. Lt. Ron Martin has recently completed the VP-45 Patrol Plane Commander syllabus Oct. 8. As a qualified PPC, he now assumes a more critical role within the VP-45 war-fighting team.

Sig MOMS Club Yardsale

MOMS Club of NAS Sigonella is holding a yard sale in Mineo on Saturday, November 1st from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. All proceeds will go toward the purchase of brand new toys to be donated to the "Toys for Tots" Christmas drive. If you would like to donate some items or need more information, please contact Mechelle at 624-0338.

NEX Job Fair

The Navy Exchange is having a Job Fair Oct. 30 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Exchange will be conducting on-the-spot interviews for the NEX main store, Mini Mart at NAS II, and Personalized Services. Full-time, part-time, and flexible positions will be offered. The NEX Job Fair will be held in the Administrative Conference Room located on the second level of the Exchange. (U.S. POSITIONS ONLY) Call 624-4278 to find out more.



By Alberto Lunetta
Signature Staff

Sicily celebrates All Souls Day

According to tradition, All Souls day which falls on Nov. 2 is a special day for Sicilian children as their parents tell them that their dead relatives would visit the house the night before leaving them presents such as sweets and toys just like Santa Claus does.

Superstitions also say that dead relatives turn themselves into ants so they could enter easily into the homes to fill the baskets and the socks prepared by the kids with gifts. Giacinto Farina, a priest of the last century, wrote that, in the past, Sicilian children used to leave their shoes on the windowsills in the hope that their dead relatives would place gifts for them.

Although this Sicilian Halloween-like tradition might seem pretty spooky, it is actually presented to children as a way of keeping the memory of their dead relatives and loved ones alive.

Yet, the *jornu di li morti* (All Souls Day) is first of all a day of religious observance to remember the faithful departed. In Catholic tradition, it is a day on which believers gather with their family members to make a pilgrimage to the cemeteries where their relatives lie waiting for the Day of Resurrection.

In Sicily, as it happens for every holiday and festival, special cakes made into symbolic shapes are prepared for the Day of Dead such as *Frutti di Martorana* (Martorana fruits), a confection of almond paste made into the shape of different fruits, *n'zuddi* (almond cookies), cocoa-based cookies (*rame di Napoli, totò and bersaglieri*), *Ossa di morti*, (bones of the dead) skulls, phalanxes and tibias shapes made by a white dough that contrasts with the dark base where the sugar darkened

Italian News

Sicilian culture and lifestyle



The *Frutta Martorana* or Martorana fruit, which is almond paste made into the shape of different fruits, is a traditional sweet that is prepared in Sicily, in November during the All Saints and All Souls Day festivities. However, this colored *dolce* is available all year around. According to tradition, these "marzipan fruits" were first baked in the Martorana Convent in Palermo, when nuns used them to decorate the monastery's bare trees during a visit of Palermo's archbishop.

close to the pan during baking and *pupi ri zuccaru* or puppets of boiled sugar.

Many customs are associated with All Souls Day's celebration. It is also traditional to set up a traditional *Fiera dei Morti* (All souls Day's Fair). This year the *fiera* will be set up along Corso Martiri Della Libertà (near the Catania train station) from Oct. 30 through Nov. 4 and will be open from 9 a.m. until midnight on pre-festive days and holidays and from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. The fair features a variety of items such as rugs, furniture, shoes, clothing, arts and crafts, antiques, food and more. Traffic will be restricted in the fair area. Parking spaces will be set up in the adjoining streets and will be limited. Car pooling and parking far from the festival area is advised.

Jazz concert in Catania

Baritone jazz vocalist Jamie Davis will perform in Catania on Nov. 6 at 9:30 p.m. at the *Sala de Curtis* Theatre that is located in via Duca degli Abruzzi n. 6.

The son of Pentecostal Church pastor, Davis, who grew up in Ohio singing spirituals and ballads and R&B, began to get interested in jazz when he was in elementary school. Soon after, he began performing as the choir soloist. At the age 13, Jaime formed a band composed mostly of extended family members and friends. The band featured spiritually tamed ballads and some early rhythm and blues. Meanwhile, Davis specialized in 'soul'-centered jazz of those years be-

ing played by Otis Redding, Ray Charles, Al Green, Lou Rawls, Milt Jackson, Horace Silver and especially Jimmy Smith.

By the time he was 16, Davis was regularly performing as a member of a band throughout his high school years in Mansfield, Ohio. After joining the U.S. Army, he became a member of *Government Issue*, an elite group of singers in Special Services, who mostly toured military bases performing, in solo and in chorus, a broad variety of songs: standard hits, swing ballads, show tunes, and some light jazz and blues. Since then, he's deepened and broadened his musical experience, studying classical choral music, and liturgical music. He then moved to New York where he studied with renowned Harlem vocal coach, Edward Boatner. Davis released his first CD, "It's All About Love" in February 2002. He currently performs with the Count Basie Orchestra at prestigious Jazz Festivals throughout the world.

For more information and tickets call *The Brass Group* at 095-7465174 or 347-6372592 or Ticket Box Office at 095-72225340.

Classic music concert in Catania

Don't miss the chance to listen to some good classic music. An amazing concert will be held at the *Teatro Sanguigni*, located in via di San Giuliano, on Oct. 29 at 9:15 p.m.

Ljiljana Borota, Christian Knebel and Sandra Stojanovic, a trio of talented pianists will be playing piano music written for four and six hands. The event will feature music by S. Sisask, F. K. Wanek, A. Schittke, T. Ristic, G. Holst. For more information and tickets call 095-321252.

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| <div>COMMUNITY CALENDAR</div> | | | | | 24 October | 25 Horseback Riding Liberty. Call 624-5187. Set your clocks back |
| 26 Agrigento Valley of the Temples and S. Leone Beach ITT Call 624-4396 | 27 Game Night - Spades NAS I Barracks #170 7 p.m. Liberty | 28 Train the Trainer FFSC 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Base Theater | 29 Tops in Blue Air Force Variety Show Nex parking lot Call x5271 for info. | 30 Topolino 2 "Kids Indoc" FFSC 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Comm. Bldg. ICR Class | 31 Autumn Fest Oct. 31 through Nov. 1. Call x5271 for more information. | 1 November Old Fashioned Auction At Autumn Fest. Call x5606/x5187 to sign up. Auctioneer needed. |
| 2 Troina & Agriturismo Farm ITT Call 624-4396 | 3 Command Financial Specialist Class FFSC Call 624-2363/4291 | 4 Arrivederci Sigonella noon to 4 p.m. Indoc Class | 5 | 6 Anger Management 3 to 4 p.m. NAVHOSP 2A-111 | 7 Picture Day Preschool Sure Start Kindergarten Call 624-4396 | 8 3-on-3 Hoops Tourney 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. NAS II Gym Call 624-2710 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 Veterans Day | 12 Rainbow Playgroup 10 to 11 a.m. 205 Housing | 13 Expectant Dads noon to 1 p.m. Public Works | 14 | 15 5K Off-road Turkey Trot Capt. Cup event. Call 624-2710 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 Beary Special Sibs 3 to 4:30 p.m. Pediatrics Waiting Area Call 624-4291 | 19 | 20 Military Family Appreciation Booth 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. NAS I Commissary Call 624-4291 | 21 | 22 |



Word Find

Pairs

B E K K S C W G J M S S Y O W H S N D L S C N C J
B O O K E N D S U D E E Z Y E T Y E Z Y G C V H T
E T O X M S A D G L M V A R F W X B L N F X O A
O A Y T E S F E B S I Z D O H X S O U R I P M P L
I I R O K L R A J T L P H C L X G O J N K M B S Y
G C H M A B C O T J H S Q B Y G E S O H C O Y T M
T S B P U R I E S O S E S S A L G N U S O U I I E
Y O S G E F N N N S L L A R E V O S G T T M V C A
P A N P S S F E O C I K W Y S N A V S S S H S K R
L U M G C E S S D C C C E K Q G P B R B P I E S R
F U T O S Q C M I Y U S S G T W E E Z E R S V S I
J T I G S D N A H H X L A U G Z S L C W N C O R N
H R G G W P H R L I K S A E T U R Q G Z O O L E G
J C H L C I Z P Q E Y V C R O G O O G X W E G K S
B V T E J H K Y R Q O C O R S E B K T H U C G A J
U D S S S M C A B W G H T J T N W H W X C Q N E A
D I Q M D A E R S T T L S B N A Q U B E V F I N E
Z C X T I W O G U H O S A F A T B Y S Q A S X S J
F E J G R G K V F Y Z H M S P G A S P L P B O C B
I X X E U C T A X M R G D B S K Y R Q D A P B N D
M K D M C J U N M S K Z N T F E I E S R A C E H T
S N L P O F B E L L B O T T O M S I R F K A K P S
U F W G E O U Z U T G S P P N W M L S K A T E S Y
N B U V S A M A J A P R F P T E D P S B L Y S X S
D H A D Q T G Y W U W H K O K C S K W G L O C K S

| | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|----------|------------|-----------|
| BELLBOTTOMS | EYES | LEGS | SHOELACES | TIGHTS |
| BINOCULARS | GLASSES | MITTENS | SHOES | TONGS |
| BOOKENDS | GLOVES | MUDFLAPS | SHORTS | TROUSERS |
| BOOTS | GOGGLES | OVERALLS | SKATES | TWEEZERS |
| BOXINGGLOVES | HANDS | OXEN | SLACKS | UNDERWEAR |
| CHOPSTICKS | HEADPHONES | PAJAMAS | SNEAKERS | |
| DICE | HOSE | PANTS | SOCKS | |
| EARMUFFS | JEANS | PLIERS | STOCKINGS | |
| EARRINGS | JUMPERCABLES | SCISSORS | SUNGLASSES | |

TRIVIA

- 1) What is a five-letter word that becomes shorter with two letters added onto it?
- 2) What was Buddy Holly's real name?
- 3) Belgium has how many provinces?
- 4) What was the brightest comet in the 20th century?
- 5) What 1970 TV series featured ventriloquist Jay Johnson?

(Answers on page 11)

Movie Connection

AMC's Theater Schedule

Friday, Oct. 24



5:30 p.m.
Intolerable Cruelty (PG-13)**



8 p.m.
The Order (R)**

Saturday, Oct. 25



1 p.m.
Freaky Friday (PG)



3:30 p.m.
My Boss's Daughter (PG-13)**



6 p.m.
The Medallion (PG-13)**

Sunday, Oct. 26



1 p.m.
Uptown Girls (PG-13)



3:30 p.m.
Intolerable Cruelty (PG-13)



6 p.m.
The Order (R)

Monday, Oct. 27



5:30 p.m.
S.W.A.T. (PG-13)*



8 p.m.
Open Range (R)

Theater Closed Tuesdays

Wednesday, Oct. 29



5:30 p.m.
Freaky Friday (PG)*



8 p.m.
Open Range (R)

Thursday, Oct. 30



5:30 p.m.
My Boss's Daughter (PG-13)



8 p.m.
The Order (R)

Friday, Oct. 31



5:30 p.m.
Jeepers Creepers 2 (R)**



8 p.m.
Mystic River (R)**

Shout

DoDDs students talk about what's happening in the community

Brownie boxes help patients

By JO3 Steve Weaver
Staff Writer



Brownie Scout troop 2 at NAS Sigonella show Capt. Denzel Garner, USNHS commanding officer, what's inside their "SWADL" boxes.

Girl Scout Brownie Scout 2 at Naval Air Station Sigonella recently came up with a great idea to help out Sailors and family members in need.

The girls (one kindergarten, four first graders and one third grader) made up boxes full of essential items for Naval Hospital Sigonella patients who must be referred to local national hospitals where these items are not available. The Brownies presented the boxes to USNH Sigonella on Oct. 16.

"They certainly identified a great project that helps us provide those personal necessities for the Sailors and family members who are referred into our local national network for specialty care that we do not have here," said Capt. Denzel Garner, USNHS commanding officer, "or for those unfortunate members who might be involved in a motor vehicle accident and would need to be taken to one of the two trauma hospitals here in Catania."

Six-year-old Breana Ball sparked the whole idea. "We had a friend who had a heart attack and they took her out in town," said Lisa Ball, troop leader. The friend talked with Ball and her daughter one day and said she didn't have toothpaste, toothbrush, or such amenities as toilet paper and things such as this while staying at a local hospital. "She was there for three days, but there was an active duty person who was there for 14 days who had nothing. She didn't get to brush her teeth or clean up for 14 days."

Breana Ball decided that something needed to be done to help the people in this predicament. "She came up with the idea and we were having a meeting and she asked to take the floor," said Ball. The Brownie then stated her plan to make care packages for these people. Breana made one box and the girls wanted to go ahead and make more. "The thing that made me the most impressed with these girls," she said, "they are using the money that they use for their patches to fund this project. They're willing to go without their patches that they earned to do this."

The packages contain: "Phone numbers for people on base, Italian translations for medical purposes, a questionnaire to tell us what they thought of the box, a magazine, towels, washclothes, pens, paper, combs, razors, soap, everything you can think of," said Ball. "They girls decorated the inside of the lid and signed it with their names. And they named it SWADL, Scouts Who Assist Daily Living."

Breana Ball told her mom what she wanted to say in a letter to the CO of the hospital, and then sent it off. "They proposed the idea and we were really excited about that," said Garner. "We said please go forth with your project...we look forward to making those available to our patients."

The girls, Kaitlyn Andres, Paige Collins, Mikayla Kuckenbecker, Mairin Kuckenbecker, Leandra Boliero and Breana Ball, were excited to be "giving things to the people in the hospital who are sick out in town."

"I think it's a fantastic community project, and act of kindness for our patients," said Garner. "This is really something to support the Sigonella community, so we're excited to be part of that. I think that it's something that is truly worthwhile for our community and the girl scouts and their leaders are to be commended for doing something. It's a great idea and really fits a niche for those patients who are referred to the local trauma hospitals."

The hospital will maintain the boxes and will be disbursed when a patient will need to stay at a local hospital overnight.

Fri. Oct. 24

Join JOX Sports bar for an 8-Ball Pool Tournament at 8 p.m. Winner takes all! All participants will automatically be entered in a drawing at the end of the month for a pool cue valued at \$100. This month's drawing will be held on Friday, November 7. Winner will be notified by phone.

Sat. Oct. 25

Show off your bike at JOX's Motorcycle Rally! Judging starts at 4pm. There will be prizes and giveaways all afternoon.

Capture the beauty of Biviere & Maulazzo Lakes with Photo Safari. Capture Sicily's autumn beauty in the Nebrodi Mountain area. You'll witness blooming vegetation at Maulazzo Lake and gaze at beautiful landscapes at Biviere Lake. You'll also see the vibrant fall leaves in the Miraglia woods along with wild animals, such as foxes, porcupines, royal eagles and more! Don't forget your polarizer and tripod. Sign up today at AU.

Learn to cook Sicilian cuisine with ITT in the traditional setting of the Trinita Agriturismo Farm in Mascialucia. The Bonajuto family will welcome you into their home and garden, giving you an extensive tour of the property. The lesson will be held in a large professional kitchen. You'll have a chance to lend a hand in the preparation of all dishes. Call x4396/x4777 for more information.

Sun. Oct. 26

Explore the most beautiful Greek temples in all of Sicily with ITT. The ancient city of Agrigento has more than 10 temples, most in remarkably good condition. Wind down with lunch at the S. Leone Beach area, full of great restaurants. Call x4396/x4777 for more information.

Mon. Oct. 27

Try your luck at bingo every Monday at the Crater Pub. Upstairs at the new Crater Pub on NAS I, located in the same building as the Galley. Play 14 games with over \$1,300 in cash prizes. Two Jackpots Super Jackpot goes for \$1,500 and the Complete Opposite Jackpot is now at \$700 in 55 numbers or less. But that's not it, there's BONUS Bingo, you can hit \$1,000 or \$500. BONANZA Bingo will be introduced. Cards will go on sale at 5:30pm/Early Bird Bingo will start at 6:30pm. Double bingo packs sell for \$30 and the single Bingo packs sell for \$20. Call X4321 for more information.

This week on...

Tue. Oct 28 - Football: Buccaneers @ Rams
AFN Atlantic 3:00 AM

Tue. Oct 28 - Movie: What Lies Beneath
AFN Atlantic 8:00 PM

Wed. Oct 29 - Fear Factor
AFN Atlantic 8:00 PM

Thu. Oct 30 - Will & Grace
AFN Atlantic 7:25 PM

Fri. Oct 31 - That 70's Show
AFN Atlantic 7:30 PM

TUNE YOUR RADIO TO 106.0 ZFM 3 - 6 PM FOR THE ROCK SHOW

FOR LATEST NEWS HAPPENING IN THE COMMUNITY GO TO AFN SIGONELLA'S WEBSITE AT afneurope.net/sigonella/

Jump from page 1

area I deemed "The Pit of Woe." It consisted of a platform four feet off the ground with a gravel "pit" in front where we would end up landing. I lost track how many times I leapt from the platform into the gravel and finishing with a roll to one side or the other, both forward and backwards. We practiced this repeatedly until the instructors were satisfied we had it right.

We then were taken to "Annie" our aircraft. It is a World War II vintage Russian built AN-2 Colt bi-plane. I was shown how to hook my static line to the aircraft and properly exit for the jump without hitting my head on the way out or being blown down the side of the fuselage and bouncing off the horizontal stabilizer. Also explained were emergency procedures for on the ground and airborne situations and then shown how a parachute actually is deployed from the pack by the static line, how to un-twist your risers and various other "in-flight emergencies" that could ruin your day.

Then it was off to the packing tables where we were shown the steps to properly pack a parachute. It was not as difficult as I had thought, but "attention to detail" is a must. The most tedious part is untangling the canopy shroud lines because they seem to get tangled in ways you thought would be impossible. After "perfecting" packing, field pack number one and two were explained for getting your chute safely off the DZ and back to the packing area undamaged after the jump.

Just when we thought we were done for the day, back to the pit for more PLFs. This was the drill over and over again. Monday morning started off with exercises to loosen up, emergency procedures again and back to the pit for more PLFs. At about 1000, we were instructed to draw a main and reserve chute and get ready to jump. That's when the butterflies hit you. BIG ONES! Our Dutch dispatcher and instructor Brord Van Der Maat thankfully had a heart to match his great sense of humor and didn't drag out the briefing. The first ten of us boarded Annie and off to 2000 feet we went. I can still remember everything like it just happened a minute ago. The noise of the engine and the wind when Brord opened the door. The sight of the airfield and surrounding countryside with the beach and North Sea only two miles away. The command was given to "Stand up, Hook up" and first man in the door. I took my position in the door and upon the command "GO" and a tap on the back, out I went. The aircraft only flies at 60 knots airspeed so there is a little wind that blows you back and down as you fall. Upon stepping out, I started to count one thousand, two thousand, three thousand and the harness became tight around my legs and chest and the feeling of falling stops. When I went to look up to check my canopy, I could not tilt my head back. TWISTED RISERS! I immediately went through my emergency procedures and in seconds my risers were untwisted and I had a clear view of a fully opened and round canopy. The whole episode from exit to untangle was approximately ten seconds. I then was able to concentrate on steering for the DZ and executing a proper PLF. The ground comes up pretty quick for a guy my size and I am thankful for the endless hours practicing in the pit. I am not sure how good my landing actually was, but I walked away so it couldn't have been too bad. High fives and hand shakes were gratuitously given by the veterans of the ground crew and then it was off to the packing tables to do it again, however on my second jump I landed in a sugar beet field 100 yards from the DZ. As I was to later discover by the very large

bruise on my left calf, sugar beets have a nasty attitude and they bite!

We did two jumps on Monday and two on Tuesday with our fifth and qualifying jump on Wednesday. However on my fourth jump, I had a very hard landing and suffered a serious bruise to my left hip. I did not want to jeopardize the real reason for going through all this and elected to sit out the jumps on Wednesday and be on the ground crew. We had a celebration for those that earned their wings with a barbecue on the beach and then left for my ultimate destination, Arnhem.

The month of September in Arnhem is a time where British and Polish veterans of the terrible battles fought for possession of the bridge over the Rhine River are welcomed back. The Dutch people have never forgotten the terrible price paid by the paratroopers and glidermen to free them from German occupation back in 1944. We arrived Thursday evening and had dinner at one of the pubs that was actually open back then. We set up camp at the campground and then went in to Oosterbeek and have a pint and meet some of the men who actually fought there. Oosterbeek is the town where General Roy Urquhart of the British First Airborne division set up his headquarters in the Hartenstein Hotel during the battle. It is now home to the Airborne Forces Museum and a must see for anyone who travels through that part of Holland. We also visited "The Cauldron" where some of the heaviest and brutal fighting took place. Veterans with their Maroon Berets were abundant, but each year their numbers dwindle. The stories that these men have to tell make any novel on the subject seem insignificant. I learned about men like Lance Sergeant Arthur Hendy of the Royal Engineers who was one of the first two British soldiers to reach the bridge eight miles away in Arnhem. They actually "borrowed" two bicycles from two German soldiers and pedaled all the way to the bridge. Arthur fought there for the next few days until he was captured while single handedly attacking a German tank with a PIAT. We turned in early to rest for our jump the next day.

Friday dawned partly cloudy and a slight breeze that would strengthen to 15 plus knots. We were worried that our commemorative jump would be scuppered by high winds, but we went ahead with the preparations anyway. We arrived at the airfield where our aircraft was being refueled. It was a C-47 Dakota that actually dropped paratroopers onto the main drop zone, Ginkle Heath, outside Oosterbeek back in 1944! We went through emergency procedures, using the Irvin static line system and practiced PLFs AGAIN! Fitting the PX1 parachute with the Irvin harness was definitely more difficult than the training chutes we used at school, especially for a guy my size. After a photo session, we loaded up and took off for Ginkle Heath. The C-47 flew twice the speed of the AN-2 and was noisier due to having two engines vice one. I was lucky enough to have a window seat and could see the whole flight take place and in less than twenty minutes we were over the DZ. Brord checked the wind again and luckily it had dropped below 15 knots and the jump was on! The command "Stand Up, Hook Up" was given and the first man, Sgt. Nigel Brewin of the Royal Signals Regiment took his place in the door. The green light came on and after a firm "GO," out Nigel went followed by fourteen other men, all of us dressed as WWII British Paras. I was number eight man "out the door" and after an uneventful decent and thankfully a perfect PLF (a large patch of Heather helped) I had successfully completed my fifth jump, qualifying me as a Dutch Army Basic Parachutist. Our ground crew and a number of "civilians" who gathered to watch our salute to the 10,000

men who jumped into glory 59 years ago greeted us at the assembly point. It was my small way of saying thanks to those men for their courage and sacrifice. A few well-received pints from members of the Parachute Regiment and friends rounded out the day's events.

Saturday was marked by the drop of the entire British Number 4 Para Regiment from 2 C-130 aircraft and a group of Dutch Commandos, followed by a jump from our C-47 by actual WWII veterans. We then piled onto approximately 60 WWII vehicles, of which some were actually used there back in '44, to "Race for the Bridge." The Dutch people lined the whole route, all 10 miles or so, to wave and thank us for our commemoration. After successfully reaching the bridge, it was back to Oosterbeek and the Hartenstein to have our jump log books stamped with the museum stamp, photos etc. and more stories from the veterans. I had to catch my train back to Ramstein AFB for my flight home so I missed the Sunday morning memorial service. Each year after the memorial service held on the Sunday closest to the 17th, which was the actual day the battle started, hundreds of school children still place flowers on the graves of the soldiers who paid the ultimate price. The Dutch people will never forget and neither will I. Next year, the 60th anniversary, will be the last big celebration due to the dwindling number of veterans who are alive and well enough to travel. I hope to be there to jump again not only at Arnhem, but at Normandy in June for the D-Day commemoration as well. Now I know what it was like and my impression whenever I put up my display will be that much better. Whoa Mohammad! (That's the British version of Geronimo!!!!)



1944 drop zones

SPORTS

Sigonellan earns MVP in softball championships

By JO3 Steve Weaver
Staff Writer

A Sailor from Naval Air Station Sigonella's Fuels Division recently competed with the 2003 All-Star Navy Softball Team in the 2003 Armed Forces Women's Softball Championships held at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida.

The All-Star Navy team took third place in the three-day tournament that featured teams from the Air Force, Army, and Marines.

ABF2 Cherry Pizzarelle was named Most Valuable Player by her team for performing brilliantly during the competition, which ran from Sept. 8 through Sept. 10. Pizzarelle then went on to play with the All-Armed Forces team.

Pizzarelle normally plays second base, but had to step up and play shortstop for the team. "I had come up to play short, I was really nervous," said Pizzarelle. "The person who was supposed to play had an operational commitment and she couldn't come. It was a learning experience, but I had fun."

"We beat Army for the first time in eight years," said Pizzarelle. "We just beat them in one game, but it was a big rush for especially the veterans who have been playing along time...they haven't beat them once."

The softball teams take their games very seriously. "The competition was great, very higher level," she said. "It was very



ABF2 Cherry Pizzarelle takes a break during play with the All-Armed Forces Team.

tough because some of these girls are amazing and some of them have been playing for years. The experience out there is amazing."

Pizzarelle said it's tough to

practice at Sigonella. "We only get to go to a couple of tournaments," she said. "It's not that the girls aren't good, it's just that the participation is really low here."

The championships were full of practiced players. "When I went there I was playing against people that get to play year round in Florida," said Pizzarelle. "So I was going there with a kind of disadvantage."

But it wasn't a big enough disadvantage to prevent her from playing her best and gaining the MVP nod. "It was a shock," said Pizzarelle. "I really wasn't expecting it. My teammates were great, they were awesome."

Head Coach for the All-Navy

thrown out in the first inning. Him getting thrown out really brought the morale down."

"[Playing for the All-Armed Forces team] was great because we all had to come together," she said. "None of us had played together at all, we've all been playing against each other. We got four days to practice and get ready to go compete against teams that play together all the time. We had to step up and learn to play together in a short amount of time and we ended up

It was a shock ... I really wasn't expecting it. My teammates were great, they were awesome.

ABF2 Cherry Pizzarelle

team STGCM James Butters stated that Pizzarelle stepping up to the challenge of playing shortstop when she was needed was one of the reasons she was voted MVP.

Pizzarelle was then picked for the All-Armed Forces team. "They take people from each branch and build another team to go play on in the regional championships for the east coast," said Pizzarelle. "So we played teams from all over the eastern region. I played second base. We played in a three-day tournament and we ended up losing in the championship game. If we would have won, we would have went on to the nationals. Our coach got

going to the championship final."

She hopes to make the All-Navy team the for a sophomore effort. "I look forward to playing next year," she said. "Each year you try out, so it doesn't matter if you were there before, you have to try out and if someone else is better, they get the spot. Hopefully I get to play second next year."

For Pizzarelle, who has played softball since high school and at Lassen Community College in California, plays softball because she loves it. "It's a very strategic, competitive game," she said. "It's not how far you can hit the ball, it's where you can hit the ball."

The Lane

2-day golf tourney

Get a buddy and see if you can win this best of two days golf tourney at Il Picciolo Golf club Nov. 1-2. Saturday will be a 2-person scramble and Sunday is a 2-person best ball. Overnight accommodations available. \$20 entry fee plus greens fees. For more information call 624-2710.

3-on-3 Hoops Tournament

Register by Nov. 5, for this double elimination tourney. There will be a maximum of four players per team with both men's and women's divisions. All games will be played on Saturday Nov. 8 at the NAS II gym starting at 10 a.m. Entry fee is \$5 per player and everyone gets a T-shirt. Awards for the top three teams. Call 624-2710 for more information.

Sigonella Circuit Training Club

Become a member of Sig's newest weight training club. Get in shape the right way. Club runs until Nov. 21 so you still have time to get started. Participate at either of the Sigonella fitness centers. Call 624-2710 for more information.

NKO from page 1

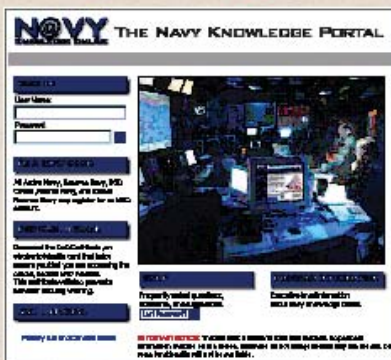
Force Excel 5 Vector Model 1.1 was first distributed to the fleet through NKO. Registered NKO users learned first about the new SkillsMapper, a self-assessment tool, and improvements in CareerMapper, which helps Sailors set career goals at levels from recruit through master levels. Another added feature detailed on the portal was the Learning Plan, which will catalog Sailors' completed learning events.

Goff compares the new Task Force Excel and NKO developments with the way career management was handled 20 years ago. "I used the bibliographies, but primarily information was passed by word-of-mouth," he said. "What's happening now is [that] subject matter experts put the tools in the website that will enhance our abilities to become well-trained, well-rounded Sailors."

Goff cited the streamlining of personnel recordkeeping as another advantage of NKO. "It didn't make sense that there were so many steps in something like taking care of your training record," he said. "Your training jacket is supposed to have your entire career inside. All Navy-provided training is in that document. After completing a Navy-funded school the first thing you did was submit your certificate to a PN or YN in your department. They made a page 4 request to get it entered into your service record, then it goes to PSD — and from there into your record. Then it's fed up to the boards. Look at all those steps! NKO is going to eliminate several steps. Your certificate is entered into NKO — that's it. Much more efficient. The paper jacket is going to disappear."

ABE2 Jason Greenroyd, NASSIG OPS arresting gear workcenter su-

Navy Knowledge Online



pervisor and career counselor, was impressed with the easy access to information provided by NKO. "I think this is great for individual Sailors, who'll get up to speed with the new technology, versus the paperwork we have now," he said. "I'm going to put the information out to the crew that everybody should check NKO periodically to familiarize themselves with the newest developments that can help them in their careers."

To sign up for NKO, log on to www.nko.navy.mil and follow the registration instructions.

Been through the desert on a camel with no name

Signonella Sailors ride camels in the arid Sahara desert in the country of Tunisia on a recent trip by Liberty. The Sailors spent 3 days in Tunisia.



National Call to Service Program Announced

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs



Navy Recruiters, Chief Machinist Mate Barry Meadors, left, and Dental Technician 2nd class Bobby Burns talks to high school students at a collage fair held at Kent State University.

WASHINGTON (NNS) — Oct. 1, the Navy began offering a new short-term enlistment program aimed at expanding the opportunities for all Americans to serve in the United States Navy.

Known as the National Call to Service (NCS), the program provides the Navy and the other military services a new way to reach a group of young Americans who otherwise might not serve in the military because of the length of traditional enlistment options.

The program works like this: A recruit enlists under NCS and incurs a 15-month active-duty service obligation following completion of initial-entry training. The 15-month obligation begins after a Sailor has completed his or her respective Navy School. Navy Schools can run from three-months to 18-months depending on rating.

Following successful completion of active duty obligation, Sailors may re-enlist for additional active duty or transfer to the selected reserve for a 24-month obligation.

Upon completion of service obligation, Sailors may remain in the selected reserve or transfer to the individual ready reserve for the remainder of an eight-year national commitment.

While in the individual ready reserve, these young people will be given the opportunity to move into one of the other national service programs, such as AmeriCorps or the Peace Corps, and time in those will count toward their eight-year total obligation.

"The National Call to Service Program will be limited to high-quality recruits, those with a high school diploma and scores in the top half of aptitude tests," said Vice Adm. Gerry Hoewing, Chief of Naval Personnel.

"We hope this will make the military more attractive to college-bound youth who might volunteer to take a short period out between high school and college to serve their nation."

The option may also attract college graduates interested in serving their country before attending graduate school. Perhaps the largest potential pool for the option are community college graduates who after serving the initial active duty period might use available incentives to enter a four-year school.

There are four incentives available under the NCS Program. The first is a \$5,000 bonus payable upon completion of active duty service.

The second is a loan-repayment option also paid at the end of the active-duty portion. The legislation allows for repayment of up to \$18,000 of qualifying student loans.

The final two incentives are tied to, but not part of, the Montgomery G.I. Bill. One gives 12 months of a full Montgomery G.I. Bill stipend — currently about \$900 a month.

The other incentive offers 36 monthly payments at one-half of the current Montgomery G.I. Bill stipend.

"This is a great option for high school graduates or even college students who want to serve the country, see the world and then go to school," Hoewing added.

Trivia Answers

- 1) Short
- 2) Charles Hardin
- 3) 10
- 4) Comet Ikeya-Seki
- 5) Soap

Navy Ball from page 1

beautiful venue, the ball room is fantastic. I think it's a great venue for our Navy men and women to celebrate the 228th birthday of our Navy.

"When I first was invited to attend and speak at the Navy Ball here for Naval Air Station Sigonella, I leaped at the chance because serving overseas really focuses a Navy unit and makes you realize how special you are and your service is to this great Navy," said Hall. "Celebrating Navy ball overseas is a very special moment. But also NAS Sigonella, their support during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom has been instrumental to our success. The amount of passengers, cargo, mail and ordinance that has come through here has been tremendous. We couldn't have been successful in either of those operations without NAS Sigonella."

The efforts of many people made the ball this year a huge success. "It turned out fantastic... better than we could have expected," said Ferguson. "A lot of it basically because of the hard work of NAS Sigonella and some incredible individuals who helped with a lot of the fundraisers, car washes, the radiothon and individuals doing bake sales like at Security. We just had phenomenal help, we couldn't have done it without the base."

"Events like this take an awful lot of hard



Photo by JCS Steve Weaver

work and dedication to make them a success," said Davison. "About three-quarters of the budget that it costs to put on this Navy ball was made through the efforts of all the volunteers who went out and did car washes, softball tournaments and a myriad of things so that we would

only have to ask for a quarter to a third of the overall cost through ticket sales."

All this work paid off, those that attended said they had a great time. "I've really enjoyed the Navy Ball for a couple of reasons," said PR2

Charles Burr of NASSIG's Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Detachment (AIMD). "This year they chose a really fantastic facility out in town and it really befits the atmosphere of remembering those who have gone before us, those of us who are here, and those who will come to replace us in the future. The food was great and the atmosphere was great."

"It was a fantastic experience to share with the members of the military who have served our country and those who are currently serving our country," Coy Fagrus-Burr, a family member. "A great time was had by all."

By patronizing the many Navy Ball fundraisers, the NASSIG community are to thank for their support. "Thank everybody in the Sigonella community for supporting this," said Davison. "This is a really great tradition, it's the 228th annual celebration of the birthday of the United States Navy. It's a proud tradition and we really appreciate all of you out there who are part of the team."

"It was a NASSIG effort," said Ferguson. "There were a lot of people who we will not know what their names were for volunteering, and those are the people who actually made it what it is, as well as those who also donated, whether it was time or money. It was them who made this evening what it was."



Photo by JCS Steve Weaver

(Clockwise from left)

A string quintet plays various melodies in the ball room at the Sheraton Hotel in Catania for the 2003 Navy Ball.

The NAS Sigonella color guard presents colors in the ball room for the opening of festivities at the Navy Ball.

Many Sailors, family members, local nationals and other enjoy some fine dining in the ball room. The menu consisted of smoked ham, lasagne, chine of pork, mashed potatoes, carrots and red wine.

Rear Adm. Garry H. Hall delivers his speech during the ball. Hall was the guest speaker for the evening.

Capt. Tim Davison, NASSIG commanding officer, MASA John Douangdara of Security (the newest member of the Navy in attendance), and Rear Adm. Hall cut the Navy Ball cake. The cake took five to six people to bring out.

Cocktails were served to begin the evening.



Photo by JCS Steve Weaver



Photo by JCS Steve Weaver



Photo by Rachel Hoken



Photo by JCS Steve Weaver

